

EXHIBIT 18



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HEADLINE: First Databank agrees to settle price fixing suit

BODY:

California, USA-based publisher First Databank, a unit of the Hearst Corporation, has agreed in principle to a settlement of a law suit which claimed that the company had colluded with San Francisco-headquartered drug wholesaler McKesson to raise the average wholesale prices of prescription drugs, which in turn would increase pharmacy profits for the latter firm. The settlement awaits approval by a US District Court judge.

The law suit originated when it emerged that McKesson, since 2003, was the only wholesaler whose prices were utilized by First Databank to produce AWP tables. Previously, it was claimed that the publisher raised from 20% to 25% the mark-ups that wholesalers were making on their drug sales. The plaintiffs, including several employers and unions, claimed that, from August 2001 to March 2005, they paid \$7.0 billion more for their drugs, than under the previous calculation method.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the AWP is an anachronism which has its origins in the 1960s when consultants hired by MediCal (California's Medicaid program) estimated mark-ups at 20%. More recently, increasing competition in the pharmacy sector had tended to reduce the actual wholesalers' margin at about 2%-3%, whereas public sector payers were demanding 5%-15% discounts from the 20% AWP.

Both companies, in written statements have insisted that no collusion took place. McKesson said: "a full reading of McKesson documents, including e-mails, demonstrates that McKesson did not enter into any agreement with First DataBank to raise published AWP's." The firm also claimed to have been unaware that it was the only company whose prices were surveyed by the publisher.

Meanwhile, First DataBank said that it "does not set pharmaceutical prices. First DataBank is a reporter and publisher of information that is collected from third parties."

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